

## **POLICE FACILITIES**

### ***Introduction***

This element of the Plan projects needs for future police facilities.

### ***Existing Facilities***

There are two levels of facilities serving uniform operations: police stations and community policing offices. Stations are bases of operations for larger county areas, and are always open for public assistance. There are currently three county police stations. Police Headquarters, located at the county government center, houses police administrative, investigative, and support functions. The Midlothian District Station, located on Providence Road near the Midlothian Turnpike, serves as the base of north county uniform operations. The Chester District station, located on West Hundred Road, just west of Jefferson Davis Highway, serves as the base of south and east county uniform operations. The Midlothian and Chester stations provide space for roll call, officer mail and reporting, and district commanders. They do not provide space for processing arrests, vehicle maintenance, or other support functions. Stations are staffed 24 hours a day, with officers on duty to respond to the public.

There are currently eight community policing offices. These provide space for community policing officers and citizens to hold meetings and training sessions, and for police officer paperwork. They are not typically staffed on a consistent basis. Existing community policing facilities have been provided using donated space and equipment.

### ***Level of Service***

There are three level-of-service indicators for the Police Department: crime rates, response times, and citizen satisfaction surveys.

*Crime Rates:* Since 1998, police calls have increased by eight percent countywide. Communities with higher crime rates and police call activity are generally located along older commercial corridors or in areas with significant commercial development (such as the Genito and Robious communities). About 54 percent of serious crime occurs in commercial areas countywide. The county has police facilities in all communities with higher than average crime rates, except in the Bellwood and Genito communities.

*Response Times:* The Police Department tracks response times to emergency service calls by three different priority levels. Priority 1 calls are life-threatening incidents. Priority 2 calls are non life-threatening emergency incidents. Priority 3 calls are non-emergency incidents. The average response time for Priority 1 calls was 2.96 minutes in 2000 (January-July), and 3.35 minutes in 2002. This figure measures the average response time required from call receipt to police officer arrival at an incident. Response times slightly increase with distance from police stations, since existing stations and officers on the beat are located in areas with the highest call rates. The major exception to this pattern is the area west of Route 288. This area is located at least five miles from a police station, and had slower response times in 2002, suggesting the need for a new police station in the area.

**Response Time Improvements (Background/Analysis)**

The Police Department is actively incorporating operational and technological measures to improve response time. These measure include automatic police vehicle location technology (GPS), mobile computers, and computer aided dispatch.

*Citizen Satisfaction Survey:* The Citizen Satisfaction Survey conducted in 1998 and 2001, had several questions related to public safety. The survey explored citizen perceptions about feelings of safety, the response time of public safety departments, and the adequacy of county crime prevention programs. Survey results indicated that citizens generally feel safe in the county, and perceptions of safety improved from 1999 to 2001.

Although survey results indicate a potential need to enhance crime prevention efforts, it is important to note that police resources are limited, and that allocating more resources in crime prevention programs may have a negative impact on response times, especially for non-emergency calls. The Police Department is expanding community policing and other efforts. Public facilities planning can improve customer service by locating additional police facilities in close proximity to public spaces, such as shopping areas (where the survey indicated some citizens' feelings of insecurity). This will increase public visibility of police officers, improve efficiency by providing patrol officers additional locations to call-in reports, and establish a physical presence to help serve area residents.

**Citizen Satisfaction Survey Questions (Background/Analysis)**

| <b><u>Question</u></b>  | <b><u>1999</u></b> | <b><u>2001</u></b> |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| <i>"How safe do you feel in your home?"</i>   |                    |                    |
| Very Safe/Somewhat Safe:  | 85%                | 92%                |
| Somewhat Unsafe/Very Unsafe:  | 7%                 | 5%                 |
| <i>"How safe do you feel in Chesterfield County parks?"</i>                                 |                    |                    |
| Very Safe/Somewhat Safe:  | 54%                | 65%                |
| Somewhat Unsafe/Very Unsafe:  | 22%                | 16%                |
| <i>"How safe do you feel in Chesterfield County shopping areas?"</i>                        |                    |                    |
| Very Safe/Somewhat Safe:  | 48%                | 57%                |
| Somewhat Unsafe/Very Unsafe:  | 28%                | 21%                |
| <i>"How safe do you feel in Chesterfield County schools?"</i>                               |                    |                    |
| Very Safe/Somewhat Safe:  | 63%                | 71%                |
| Somewhat Unsafe/Very Unsafe:  | 17%                | 14%                |
| <i>"How safe do you feel on Chesterfield County roads?"</i>                                 |                    |                    |
| Very Safe/Somewhat Safe:  | 56%                | 58%                |
| Somewhat Unsafe/Very Unsafe:  | 21%                | 21%                |
| <i>"How would you rate the response time of the Chesterfield County Police Department?"</i> |                    |                    |
| Excellent/Good  | 81%                | 82%                |
| Fair/Poor   | 19%                | 18%                |
| <i>"How would you rate the adequacy of the county's crime prevention programs?"</i>         |                    |                    |
| Excellent/Good  | 57%                | 61%                |
| Fair/Poor   | 43%                | 39%                |

## **Findings**

This analysis considered potential needs for future police facilities, using the geography of existing beats, growth trends, and per capita calls for service. The needs of smaller county areas were also examined, using police call and incident data, and indicators for each of the 25 county communities. Recommendations for community policing offices are based on the location of existing community policing programs and calls for service.

*West 360 Corridor Station:* Increasing population, commercial development, service call growth, and worsening traffic conditions in the western Route 360 corridor will require an enhanced police presence in the area. A new police station is needed to serve the west county area, and should be located with convenient access to the future Powhite extension.

*Community Policing Offices:* Community policing offices should be planned in partnership with communities served by these offices. Traditional community policing offices serve a small geographic area, with a specific population. The location of these facilities should be based upon the goals for each office. Community policing offices may serve the general public, or be focused on the specific neighborhood or community, based on the program and schedule of community policing officer(s) working in the area. Expanded community policing offices may include space for police officers to hold meetings and call in reports, and staff to respond to citizen inquiries. These offices may offer regular office hours, public access for routine police assistance, and space for community group meetings.

*Support and Administrative Facilities:* Police support and administrative functions are generally centralized. Because of the nature of police work, the need to interact with others in the department, the location of courts, magistrates, and the jail, full decentralization of support and administrative functions would affect operational efficiency. Police officers need to come to the government center to process arrests, maintain vehicles, obtain warrants for arrests, etc. Currently, these functions are located in close proximity to one another. Travel time for police officers is limited to one trip to the government center.

## **Locational Criteria**

- Police stations should be located to easily serve multiple beats, preferably located at a juncture of multiple beats, with quick (preferably direct) access to a major arterial road. If possible, they should be located near two arterial roads that offer both east-west and north-south travel.
- Specialized community policing offices serving a limited community (such as a shopping area or apartment complex) should only be located within communities with an active community policing program.
- Expanded community policing offices should be located at or near a community focal point. They do not require access to major arterial roads. However, to provide opportunities for usage by patrol officers, thus increasing police presence in the community, facilities should be located conveniently. These facilities should offer adequate space for community and police meetings.
- Community policing offices may be located within shopping centers, shopping malls, or as independent structures.

## ***Recommendations (Map 12)***

The following recommendations will further Comprehensive Plan goals for orderly development, by extending new station resources in the high growth west county area. Additionally, these recommendations will promote Comprehensive Plan goals for sustaining neighborhoods, by locating community policing offices in established communities.

### **2002-2007**

- a. **Western Hull Street District Station:** Construct a new police station in the western Route 360 corridor area.
- b. **Genito Community Policing Office:** Open an expanded community policing office in Genito community, convenient to Hull Street and Genito Roads.
- c. **Enon Training Center:** Complete the Enon Training Center for public safety personnel.
- d. **Police Evidence and Storage Facility:** Construct a new police evidence and storage facility in the government center area, located with future public safety facilities. Currently facilities housing property are dispersed in the county complex, creating inefficiency for police officers, and inconvenience for citizens.

### **2007-2022**

- e. **Harrowgate Community Policing Office:** Open an expanded community policing office in the Harrowgate community, co-located with other public facilities in the community, or along the Jefferson Davis corridor.
- f. **Bellwood Community Policing Office:** Open an expanded community policing office in the Bellwood community, co-located with other public facilities in the community, or along the Jefferson Davis corridor.

### **Benefits of Police Facility Recommendations (Background/Analysis)**

**Western Hull Street District Station:** The station will complete the decentralization of patrol officers in the county.

**Genito Community Policing Office:** The office will serve a community with higher than average crime rates not presently served by a community policing office.

**Enon Training Center:** This center will provide opportunities for officers to receive the training they need on a regular and consistent basis.





**Police Evidence and Storage Facility:** The Police Department has responsibility for evidence to be used in court cases as well as found and stolen property. Currently, facilities to house this property are spread over the county complex, creating inefficiency for police officers, and longer wait times for citizens attempting to retrieve property.

**Harrowgate Community Policing Office:** The office will serve a community with higher than average crime rates not presently served by a community policing office.

**Bellwood Community Policing Office:** The office will serve a community with higher than average crime rates not presently served by a community policing office.

# Public Facilities Plan: Police

## Recommendations (Map 12)

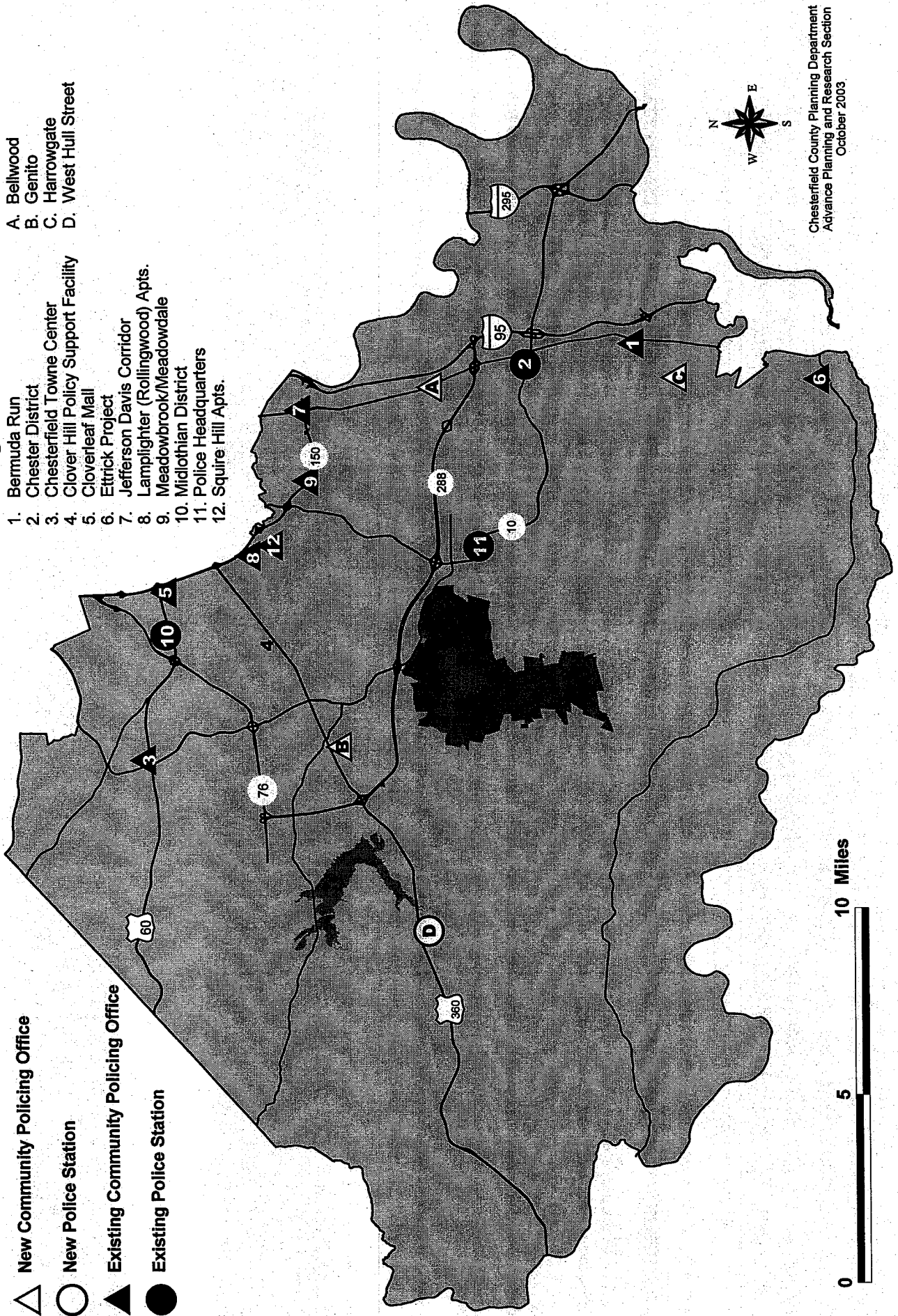
-  New Community Policing Office
-  New Police Station
-  Existing Community Policing Office
-  Existing Police Station

### Proposed Facilities

- A. Bellwood
- B. Genito
- C. Harrowgate
- D. West Hull Street

### Existing Facilities

1. Bermuda Run
2. Chester District
3. Chesterfield Towne Center
4. Clover Hill Policy Support Facility
5. Cloverleaf Mall
6. Ettrick Project
7. Jefferson Davis Corridor
8. Lamplighter (Rollingwood) Apts.
9. Meadowbrook/Meadowdale
10. Midlothian District
11. Police Headquarters
12. Squire Hill Apts.



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